

3-1979

SPECIAL FEATURE  
BRIGID LAY

JULY 20, 1978

PERFORMING ARTS FROM THE PEOPLE'S  
REPUBLIC OF CHINA  
(INSERTS IN TAPE LIBRARY)

TAPE: CUT ONE: CHINESE MUSIC: ESTABLISH AND HOLD UNDER:

ANNCR: "ONE HUNDRED BIRDS PAY HOMAGE TO THE PHOENIX" IS THE  
TITLE OF THAT MUSIC, BUT THESE ARE STRANGE BIRDS TO BE  
HEARD IN THE GREEN HILLS OF VIRGINIA, NOT A STONE'S THROW  
FROM WASHINGTON, D.C.

TAPE: CUT ONE: UP BRIEFLY AND FADE UNDER:

ANNCR: THE MUSIC COMES FROM VIRTUOSO MUSICIANS WHO ARE PART OF  
THE PERFORMING ARTS COMPANY OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF  
CHINA. THIS TROUPE, COMPOSED OF 150 SINGERS, DANCES,  
ACTORS AND INSTRUMENTALISTS IS MAKING A FIVE-CITY TOUR OF  
THE UNITED STATES -- THE FIRST APPEARANCE OF A MAJOR  
ENSEMBLE FROM THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC IN 25 YEARS. FOLLOWING  
PERFORMANCES IN NEW YORK CITY, THE COMPANY CAME TO WOLF  
TRAP FARM PARK FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, JUST OUTSIDE THE  
NATION'S CAPITAL. VOA'S BRIGID LAY WAS AT THE OPENING  
NIGHT AND, AFTER THE PERFORMANCE, TALKED WITH MRS.  
JOY ZINOMAN, AN EXPERT ON WESTERN AND ASIAN THEATER,  
WHO IS ACCOMPANYING THE TROUPE ON THEIR AMERICAN TRAVELS.  
.....HAS DETAILS.

VOICE: LONG RED SILK BANNERS SHOOT SKYWARD, WEAVE SNAKES AND  
HIEROGLYPHICS AND HUGE WHIRLING ARCS IN THE AIR;  
ELEGANTLY GARBED LADIES IN PINK AND SEAGREEN GLIDE AND

VOICE:  
(CONT)

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TWIRL AROUND THE STAGE AS THOUGH ON BALL-BEARINGS; SWORD  
PLAY AND ACROBATICS MAKE YOU CATCH YOUR BREATH WITH  
EXCITEMENT AT THE SPLIT-SECOND TIMING, THE UNCANNY PRECISION  
AND AGILITY OF THE PERFORMERS; THE EYE IS DAZZLED BY SPLENDID  
COSTUMES, INTRIGUED BY PAINTED FACES, WHILE THE EAR IS  
TEASED BY STRANGE HARMONIES AND ASSAILED BY THE DRAMATIC  
BEATING OF STICKS AND CYMBALS.

TAPE: CUT TWO -- MUSIC

VOICE: THE PROGRAM THAT THE PERFORMING ARTS COMPANY OF THE PEOPLE'S  
REPUBLIC OF CHINA HAS BROUGHT TO THE UNITED STATES IS A  
KALEIDOSCOPE OF COLOR AND SOUND. IT INCLUDES ETHNIC FOLK  
DANCE, VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC -- WITH FAMOUS  
SOLOISTS, ONE OF WHOM, PIANIST LIU SHIH-KUN, PLACED  
SECOND TO VAN CLIBURN IN THE FAMOUS TCHAIKOWSKY IN 1958 --  
THERE IS AN EXCERPT FROM A MAO REVOLUTIONARY BALLET AND  
SEVERAL SCENES FROM THE CHINESE THEATER'S GREAT GLORY, THE  
PEKING OPERA. OF THIS PERFORMING ART, JOY ZINOMAN NOTES...

TAPE: CUT THREE -- ZINOMAN

"PEKING OPERA IS NOT AN ANCIENT FORM BUT IT IS A TRADITIONAL  
FORM WHICH COMES FROM A LONG LINE OF PREVIOUS FORMS AND  
WHICH WAS IDENTIFIED IN ABOUT 1790 AND, AS A MATTER  
OF FACT, WAS THE DOMINANT POPULAR CULTURAL FORM UP UNTIL  
ABOUT 1964 WHEN IT WAS REPRESSED. THERE ALSO IS A LOT OF  
ANCIENT MUSIC (IN THE PROGRAM), INDEED MUSIC FROM ALL  
PERIODS. I THINK THE MUSIC IN THE PEKING OPERA IS THE MOST  
TRADITIONAL PART OF THE PROGRAM."  
MUSIC

VOICE: MUSIC IS A VITAL INGREDIENT OF PEKING OPERA PERFECTLY  
MATCHED TO THE MOVEMENT OF THE CHARACTERS AND BUILDING  
THE TENSION AND EXCITEMENT...

TAPE: CUT FOUR: PEKING OPERA ORCHESTRA

VOICE: FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS, PEKING OPERA HAS BEEN BACK ON THE STAGES OF MAINLAND CHINA AND AS POPULAR AS EVER. IT'S EASY TO SEE WHY.--IT'S A COMBINATION OF ACTING, SPEAKING, SINGING, MOVEMENT, COSTUME AND MAKE-UP, WITH MARVELOUS ACROBATIC AND TUMBLING FEATS AND A GOOD DEAL OF BOISTEROUS HUMOR. / IN ONE PRESENTATION, "SAN CHA KOU" (PRON. SAN-JACK-O), TWO FRIENDS MEET IN THE DARK -- ACTUALLY ON A BRILLIANTLY-LIGHTED STAGE -- AND THINKING THEY ARE ENEMIES TRY TO KILL EACH OTHER. ANOTHER EXCERPT, A GOOD DEAL MORE ELABORATE AND A RIOT OF STICK - AND SWORDPLAY IS "THE MONKEY MAKES HAVOC IN HEAVEN," IN WHICH THE MONKEY KING AND HIS FORCES CHALLENGE AND OVERCOME THE ARMIES OF THE JADE EMPEROR OF THE HEAVENLY COURT. / THE STORIES IN PEKING OPERA ARE TAKEN FROM TRADITIONAL CHINESE ROMANCES BUT JOY ZINOMAN TELLS US THAT THE STORIES ARE NOT IMPORTANT...

TAPE: CUT FIVE -- ZINOMAN

"IN THE OPERA 'SAN CHA KOU,' THE WHOLE THING TAKES PLACE IN THE DARK AND REALLY NOT MUCH HAPPENS...THEY JUST DO A WHOLE LOT OF TERRIBLY CLEVER PANTOMIMIC BITS ABOUT THE DARK; BUT WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THE COORDINATION BETWEEN THE MOVEMENT AND THE MUSIC; WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS THE PRECISION OF THE GESTURE AND WHAT EACH ONE OF THEM MEANS AND THAT, OF COURSE, IS VERY DIFFICULT TO GET INTO WITHOUT A SORT OF RUNNING COMMENTARY. / IT IS IMPORTANT TO SEE THE DIFFERENT WAYS IN WHICH THE INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERS MOVE AND TO SEE THE ENTIRE PEKING OPERA FORM IN ITS VISUAL AND AURAL DYNAMIC..."

VOICE: IT SEEMS CLEAR FROM THE MAKE-UP OF THE TWO PROGRAMS PRESENTED BY THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC PERFORMING ARTS TROUPE THAT IT WAS THE INTENTION OF THE ARTISTIC ORGANIZERS TO SHOW HOW

VOICE: CHINESE THEATER ARTS HAVE COME TO NEW LIFE AFTER A DECADE  
(CONT) IN WHICH ONLY THE MAO REVOLUTIONARY BALLET WAS ALLOWED.  
JOY ZINOMAN CONFIRMS THIS...

TAPE: CUT SIX -- ZINOMAN

"THEY ARE REFLECTING THIS RECENT CULTURAL THAW IN CHINA  
AND ARE, I THINK, SIGNIFICANTLY INDICATING TO US, ONE,  
A RETURN OF DIVERSITY IN THE ARTS IN CHINA, AND, TWO, THE  
RETURN OF TRADITIONAL FORM. AND THEY SAY THAT THEY ARE  
INTERESTED IN LETTING 'A HUNDRED FLOWERS BLOOM.'"

TAPE: CUT SEVEN - MUSIC - HOLD UNDER IF DESIRED

VOICE: THAT WAS MRS. JOY ZINOMAN WHO IS TRAVELING WITH THE  
PERFORMING ARTS COMPANY OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF  
CHINA. FOLLOWING ENGAGEMENTS IN NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON,  
D.C., THEIR PRESENTATION OF MUSIC, DANCE AND PEKING OPERA  
WILL VISIT MINNEAPOLIS, SAN FRANCISCO AND LOS ANGELES.

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